THE
Theatrical Observer;
AND
Daily Bills of the Play.

"Nothing extenuate nor set down aught in malice."

No. 742 Passion Week, 1824. Price 1d.

Covent Garden Theatre.

On Saturday evening, Mr. Fawcett's Benefit was, we are happy to say, most numerously attended; which was but a just recognition of the long-established claims that gentleman has upon the admirers of sterling acting. The performances were *Pride shall have a Fall*; *A Roland for an Oliver*, and some scenes of the last Pantomime;—and which proved highly entertaining. A Grand new Spectacle is to be produced here on Easter Monday, entitled "*The Spirit of the Moon; or, the Inundation of the Nile.*"

Drury Lane Theatre.

Mr. Bunn, the Stage-Manager of this Theatre, had, we understand, a numerous audience at his Benefit on Saturday night. We were not present; so cannot say anything further on the subject. The Easter Monday new Piece is to be called, "*Zoroaster; or the Spirit of the Star*", which is announced as being exceedingly splendid.

Sadlers Wells, newly decorated, opens under the management of Mr. Williams, on Easter Monday. The Surrey, Cobourg, Davis's Amphitheatre, &c. also open on that day.

MATHEWS AT HOME, with (and from) his TRIP TO AMERICA.

We regret that until the present interval of rest for the great "*houses*," (the *Montagues* and *Capulets* of the dramatic world) a full and particular notice of Mathews's excellent Entertainment has not appeared in our pages. This extraordinary man is again, after *five* previous seasons, delighting the whole town. It would be naturally imagined that a repetition of former character must appear; but no—Mathews, like an experienced Indian Pearl fisher, has dived into the ocean of American manners and peculiarities, and brought to light the precious gems. Any Englishman conversant with the country—nay, any *new Englander*, would tell you it was next to an impossibility to create an entertainment for the stage, from the dull uniformity of *character* in every American town. To the transient observer there appear but *one* mouth fitted to *one* segar—*one* hat—*one* jacket—*one* tone of voice, and *one* idea! Mr. Mathews, however, possesses the art of *discrimination* in an eminent degree—he has picked up a laugh, here, culled a peculiarity, there—pocketted a *genuine* Yankeeism at one time, and stolen a large wig and pigtail at another. If there is character to be found behind a pair of black rimmed spectacles, or under the cock of a straw hat, Mr. Mathews immedi-

ately turns it to his own account: and if we are to judge by the crowded houses, to a pretty good account.

When he details his journey to New York, he very judiciously introduces two of his own countrymen, each full of whimsical peculiarity, to draw forth, and contrast with the Americans. *Jack Topham*, and his *Cousin Bray*, are as amusing as the portraits of the Yankees themselves. *Rivers*, the *boss* of the Hotel in Elizabeth Town, is a rich specimen of independent incivility—an English landlord would certainly stand a chance of getting kicked, without legal redress, if he *treated* his guests as Mr. Rivers *does*, (for he is a living character) The steam-boat and stage-coach characters are excellently sketched: "*General, have you any baccy?*"—"*No, Judge, ask the Major.*" The major is the *driver* of the coach, and this part is not in the least over-coloured, however singular it may sound to English ears.

The *table d'hote* at the boarding-house, is stuffed with rich bits—the confusion of the unfortunate *Nigger* dropping the oysters out of the sauce—and the carving gentleman who more pertinaciously than politely asks every one to have a *slice of am!* are ludicrously given. American *fun* appears to be rather caustic, if we are to judge of it by *Mr. Raventop* and his jests---Mathews's personation is here inimitable. Major *Grimstone* is "*very well.*" *Mr. Pennington*, an American member of Congress, who delivers his opinion on the various English tourists who have visited the *new* world, (some, as he says, because they made the *old* world too hot to hold them) is, we understand, a close imitation of Mr. R*******, a gentleman well known for his eloquence in the senate-house of the United States. The Negro tragedian, with his performance, and the description of his audience, are droll in the extreme; and the black manager's melody of "*Opossum up a Gum Tree,*" is remarkable not only for its whim and character, but for the exceeding pretty native air. The *Mustering of the Militia* is a rather severe satire upon American tactics; perhaps we may be willing to excuse its being overcharged, in consideration of the very hearty laughter it elicits---it is full of the broadest humor.

Hiring a servant in America differs from that ceremony in England, inasmuch, that the master is to consider himself the person under obligation. The Frenchman's song at the public dinner, given to the bashful *General Jackson* at New Orleans, is one of the pleasantest *morceaux* of the entertainment. *Jonathan W. Doubikins*, a real *Yankee*, is perhaps the closest imitation of the American *Cockney*, that can be imagined. His stories of his *Uncle Ben*, are so delightful, that we long to be acquainted with *Uncle Ben* himself, even tho' he cheated us as he always choused *Jonathan*. This character approaches too near to nature to suppose otherwise than that Mr. Mathews studied *Jonathan W.* from actual life. An American gentleman of the highest respectability has assured us, that *J. W. Doubikins* may be found at the outskirts of every town in the United States—the same self-conceited nasal twang—the same *liberal* sentiments—

the same elevated opinion of his sweet self—and that it is a perfec picture. *Monsieur Mallet's* visit to the Boston post-office, for a letter from his beloved daughter in France, exhibits Mr, Mathews in an entirely new line—*the pathetic!* Few, although laughing the previous moment, can avoid shedding tears at the powerful display of anxiety and distress of the poor French emigrant father, and his look of horror and consternation when he discovers that he has destroyed the letter for which he had been waiting so long—the best tragedian in London could not have produced a greater effect.

The *enticements* for Mr. Mathews to perform in a *Theatre,* where the yellow fever has carried off all *the stars,* is painfully whimsical. The German *locum tenens* of an American judge, with his pestilent misrepresentations and explanations of the laws, is an admirably drawn character from life---gravity itself could not withstand Mr. Mathews's personation We would defy the whole bench of English judges to keep their *Exchequer, Common Pleas,* or *Chancery* faces in any sort of serious order, or to escape with unruffled wigs, when they honor the *At Home* with a visit, The song of the "*Illinois Inventory,*" is rapid and pleasing; and the *Farewell Finale* winds up the *table acts* with perfect good humour. The third part of the evening's entertainment is filled up by a Monopolylogue, entitled "*All Well at Natchitoches,*" The spectators in the pit or boxes little know the pains that are taken, or the *tact* that is required, to produce a piece with seven or eight characters, all to be represented without aid or confederacy, by one performer. This difficulty is accomplished, and with success. Mathews was the first actor who attempted this novel and arduous manner of diverting his auditors. Yates, Harley, Reeve, Monsieur Alexandre, *cum multis aliis,* have tried it, but we will venture to assert, that in this branch of his art Mathews stands *alone,* (Mr. Elliston stood "*Single,*" and did it admirably too.) Mathews's several assumptions of the characters, of the cobbling *Colonel Hiram Peggler,* who thinks that every thing "does him a deal of good," whose voice is thick with rum, and whose head is filled with deadly hatred for the lodger on the first floor of his stall, Monsieur *Capot;* of the monstrous fat negro runaway, *Agamemmon;* of *Jonathan W. Doubikins,* in propria persona, where the character of the Yankee is kept up perhaps better than in the original story, where American liberty and negro slavery jostle each other in the same parenthesis, and where dear *Uncle Ben* again *does Jonathan,* and "walks into him complete." Nor must we omit to notice the French emigrant tailor, Capot---Mr. Mathews's spare figure, and perfect pronunciation of the language, added to the characteristic manner in which he sings the two little introduced *Vaudvilles,* render this personation exceedingly amusing. We turn from this to the unfortunate Hibernian speculator, *Mr. Cornelius O'Sullivin,* a funny mixture of mirth and rags, *want* and *wit,* who finishes the entertainment with perfect satisfaction to himself and to the audience.

In concluding our remarks, upon this very successful entertainment, we are happy to coincide with general opinion, that Mr. Mathews deserves all his good fortune.

English Opera-House, Strand.

This Evening Mr. BARTLEY will deliver his

Lecture on Astronomy.

PART I—SUBJECTS AND SCENIC ILLUSTRATIONS.

INTRODUCTION; Form of the Earth proved on a

LARGE GLOBE, EIGHTEEN FEET IN CIRCUMFERENCE,

Prolemaic System—Tychonic system—Copernican system—The Telescope invented—The last System, as established by the Discoveries of Modern Astronomers—The Earth's situation and motion.

PART II—Solar system separately considered—The Telescopic View of the Sun, and the [redacted] magnitudes of the Sun and Earth—Of the appearance and Phases of Venus—The Earth and Moon—Map of the Moon—The Phenomena and Affections of the Moon—The Changes and Phases of the Moon explained by a new Instrument—The Earth a Moon to the Moon—The Appearances of the Earth to the Lunar inhabitants—The Telescopic Appearance of Mars—The Four Asteroides—The Belts and Satellites of Jupiter—The Rings and Satellites of Saturn—Uranus, or Geordium Sidus—Comets—The Comet of 1680, in the Constellation Lyra—The memorable Comet of 1811—The splendid Comet of 1819, in Taurus.

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MAGNIFICENT ORRERY,

Of unparallelled extent, describing

A CIRCLE OF ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY FEET.

In this Machine, the Sun, and all the Planets and Satellites revolving round him, are seen in motion.

THE COMET OF 1811.

descending in its eccentric orbit towards the Sun, arriving at its perihelion, and retrograding, and the whole presenting an humble imitation of the order and regularity which pervails throughout the magnificent works of that Ineffable Contriver, "Who form'd, directs, and animates the whole."

KING'S THEATRE.—On Friday evening a most shamefnl riot took place at this Theatre at the *Concert Spiritnel*, as it is called. Madame CATALANI had been announced to sing on the occasion; but in consequence of a most severe cold, attended with hoarseness, she found, after waiting till the last moment, that it was impossible for her to utter a note. Due notice was given, but the audience became furious. Catalani was sent to. She left her sick bed—appeared on the stage—an address was made—applause followed, and she retired.

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